

It is very difficult for common United States citizens to understand what life is like for the soldiers that are fighting for our freedom overseas. The speaker in this email, an American soldier fighting in Iraq, attempts to articulate to common United States citizens the conditions and lifestyle that he must endure. In order to communicate the true extent of his way of life, the writer used casual diction, figurative language like hyperboles, imagery, voice and other mediums of rhetoric.

First of all, the writer uses very casual diction throughout the email to express his thoughts like “Ever stagger to the john at 0400?” (20), and “It gets really freakin’ cold here at night” (23). This casual diction helps to connect with the reader and allow him to feel more comfortable as he relates to what he is reading. His choices in diction also help to convey the writer’s casually candid voice, tone and overall theme that his living conditions in Iraq basically suck. The diction used in “Go to your vacuum... You just get used it” (3) is a prime example of the casual conveyance of the writer’s obvious discomfort with his surroundings. The writer explains how dusty he is at all times of the day and yet his explanation is conveyed in such a manner that the reader is not completely overwhelmed but rather just nonchalantly informed that it sucks but there is no avoiding the dust.

The writer also has strong inclinations to use syntax like pathos and ethos. “If you really want to... pugs” (13); is an obvious example of pathos, as the writer is appealing to the reader’s emotion by referring to an object like a pug. This reference will drag up whatever feelings that people have about pugs to explain his living mates rather than just saying straight up that the soldiers he lives with are loud, smelly and socially awkward. Also, throughout the email the writer consistently uses second-person perspective pronouns to appeal to ethos. “First off, we are going to prepare our living area” (2) helps to make it seem as if the writer is bringing us, the reader, along with him in his portrayal of his lifestyle; a very strong appeal based on the credibility of the soldier’s persona. The writer helps to communicate his theme with the use of figurative language throughout the email. For example, “All I have to say... remove the filth” (25), is a hyperbole that is a much more effective way to explain how dirty the latrine experience is rather than just simply stating it.